

A

# REVIEW

OF THE

# STATE

OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Saturday, November 12. 1709.

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**M**Y last was directed to the *Dis-senters in England*, to convince them, and, if possible, remove a late Delusion put upon them, and too much prevailing, at least beginning so to do—That the Dispute about Toleration, and imposing the Common-Prayer Book in *Scotland*, shall be dangerous to the Toleration in *England*——

I am not ignorant of the Fury and Indignation of a Party in *England*, who pretend to be Advocates for forcing Innovations upon the People in *Scotland*: Their new printed Papers give frequent Intimations of it—And the *Observer* and *Review* for telling you these Things, are threatned very hard—One of their new Pamphleteers

says, The Scriblers have already rais'd the Resentments of the Clergy to a very high Degree—And the *Low-Church*, he says, will be certain to feel the Weight of it one time or other—*Rehearsal Reviv'd*, N<sup>o</sup> 14. This is new Party Firebrand that begins with exclaiming against the Liberty of the Press—and is for putting down all the Scriblers, as he calls them—but begins his Paper with current Pages and Numbers, and marks it Vol. I.—which must be Nonsense, if he did not expect to be continu'd himself to a Number of Leaves, and the Bulk of Volumes—Perhaps these People expect to be spar'd for their abundant Merit, in the general Conflagration of *Observers*, *Reviews*, and other Writers,

But

But if this Paper must die the Death of its Fathers, I say, and be silenc'd for speaking too much Truth—Let me turn it to you, for whose Sake all this Stir is made, and whose Liberty is the Eye-sore, that these People are afflicted with—And before Execution, let me move you to one Thing, *Viz.* Not to be led hoodwink'd and blind into your own Destruction.

That the Toleration of *Dissenters* in *England* is openly and secretly pointed at, and envy'd by this Party, is a Truth, they themselves will not dispute—And the same Author I mention'd above, N<sup>o</sup> 13. has declar'd open War against it, pull'd off the Vizor, and drawn his *High Church* Scymater in the Face of the *QUEEN*, declaring it must and shall come down, tho' her Majesty has given her Faith and Honour to preserve it inviolate — For his good Manners, I think, her Majesty is his Debtor very much.

But not to make him Famous by his Infamy—Let me ask the *Dissenters* in *England* one Thing—Upon the Supposition of this Plot—Can you think your Liberty the better to be defended, and the more secure for your Brethren in *Scotland* having lost theirs? Why should you desire any Body, in a Day when various Tyrannies are invading us, to be easie in parting with establish'd Liberties? — The Toleration in *Scotland*, which these People talk of, is an Invasion upon Civil Right, 'tis a breaking in upon a Sacred Constitution, 'tis in short an invading the new cemented Union—And as I said in my last, if you broach that Cask, it will be an empty Hoghead to you ever after. Now, can your Security be stronger, for the Church of *Scotland* being made weaker? Can your Liberties be the better preserv'd, by theirs being destroy'd? — What Reason for this can be given, I cannot yet see.

It would be enquir'd here, what it is in *Scotland* you would have the Church there tolerate—Should ye tolerate the Common Prayer, is that it they want? — 'Tis evident, No; for they did not use it when they were Masters, nor would not generally, if it were tolerated— What then, shall they tolerate *Episcopacy*? —

Really, Gentlemen, you are strangely ignorant in *England* of Affairs of *Scotland*, nor do I see you are willing to be inform'd— Let them abstract *Jacobinism* from *Episcopacy* in *Scotland*, and I undertake to prove, that *Episcopacy* enjoys more Toleration at this time in *Scotland*, than *Presbyterianism* does in *England*, since there are above 150 *Episcopal* Ministers now preaching in *Scotland* in the Parish-Churches, that enjoy their Benefices and Stipends, and yet are *Episcopal*, and ever were so; and in some of these, the *Presbyterians*, who are the establish'd Church, preach in Conventicles under them— Either this is true, or it is not; If it is true, then the *Episcopal* Ministers want no Toleration in *Scotland*— If it be not true, let them deny it— And answer a little Tract publish'd in *London*, and sold, if I remember, by Mr. *Nathaniel Cliff* in the *Poultry*, where a List of their Names and Places, where they are planted, is set down— I think this is a Kind of Toleration, beyond what any *Dissenter* enjoys in this Kingdom.

Well, who is it then in *Scotland* the Toleration is demanded for? Is it for *Jacobinism*? — No, they won't have it laid so, neither— But it is for *Dissenters*, an indefinite, signifying *No-Body*; for who are these *Dissenters*? Either they will take the Oaths, or they are *Jacobites*. Let us see this in short.

By the 22d Act of the fourth Session of the first Parliament, *William and Mary*, Anno 1693; it is Enacted thus, 'That all the Ministers possess'd of Benefices in *Scotland*, tho' not conforming to the *Presbyterian* Church-Government, should have their Majesties Protection, and continue in their said Benefices, provided they took the Oaths to their Majesties— By Vertue of this Act they continue in the Parish Churches as above.

Now, what would the other ask a Toleration for, in what Manner, and to what Purpose? They will not say, they would tolerate *Jacobinism*— Well then, whenever a Toleration is granted, it must be to such as will take the Oaths, &c. But he must be drunk or mad that takes the Oaths to preach in a Meeting-House, who, if he would



would have taken the Oaths, had never come out of the Church. This is a preposterous Piece of Nonsense, and discovers plainly the Project, That it is a *Jacobite* Plot, a meer Combination against the Union; I hope, no *Dissenter* in *England* can be found to desire the *Scots* to be thus deceiv'd.

If now a Toleration were allow'd, what would they do with it? — I answer, They would not accept of it, or if they did, it would divide and undo them; and for this I refer to the same Traſt, where it is at large prov'd — Toleration with Oaths would ruin the Party, if they accepted it, for it would immediately expose them as *Jacobites*, the Generality of them at this time refusing the Oaths, and their Ministers declar'd to their late Lord Provost of *Edinburgh*, in the Time of the late Prosecution, and which I had from his Lordship's own Mouth, and his Leave to publish it, That if they should conform to the Oaths, their People would not hear them — It cannot then be a Toleration with the Oaths that they desire; and a Toleration without the Oaths, I presume, they would not have the Face to ask — The Design therefore must look farther than all this.

Wonder not then, that they are so mov'd at this Paper. The detecting this Fraud pinches in so tender a Place, that they cannot bear it — I entreat every considering Reader of this Paper then to open his Eyes, and see, what is doing in the *North* — and what is aim'd at. Be no longer deceiv'd, Gentlemen, with the specious Name, the jingling Words *Liberty* and *Conscience*; I say it again, It is neither *Common-Prayer* or *Toleration* that these Men seek, neither if they had them, would they use any of them.

But the Aim is at a visible Rupture of the Union; They know, the Word Toleration is a specious, plausible Word among you in *England*; they know, the Uniformity of Worship in *Scotland* is become a Civil Right by the Union; they know, to attempt it, will make a terrible Breach, *England* will appear in its Favour, the Church of *England*, they think, will take it ill, if refus'd, &c. They know, the *Scots* will never hear of it — nor can ever

yield to it — And this is the most acceptable Strife they can begin amongst us in *England* — But to clear up your Thoughts, and direct you how to act, let me give you two parallel Cases before you, One of the Church of *England*, One of the *Dissenters*, which may, if you please to be directed, be your Guide.

First, For the *Dissenters*; Take King James's Proposal for taking off the Pœnal Laws and Test; It was a specious Thing, carry'd a most just Out-side, sensibly touch'd the *Dissenters* in *England*, who had suffer'd deeply by those Laws, and some of you were drawn in then, as some are now, to bite at the Bait, without feeling for the Hook. But the wisest, the best, and, God be prais'd, the most of you saw thro' the Mask, and shunning the Snare, wisely determin'd in Favour of the great Interest of the Protestant Religion, and the Authority of the Law, and rather chose to yield to the Hazard of Pœnal Laws, than overthrow publick Right, by the dispensing Power of the King; and it was not long before you saw, that the Safety of the Nation depended under God upon this happy Distinction.

The next Instance, I shall give you, is in the Occasional Bill — The Parliament, both *Lords* and *Commons*, agreed in this, That the Occasional Time-serving Conformity mention'd in that Bill, ought to be prevented; the *Lords* especially, in their several Conferences with the *Commons*, always agreed in that Point — But finding the Act extended to several Things which they could not dispense with, and that it was in general an Invasion of publick Right — and the Liberty of the Subject establish'd in the Revolution, they rejected the Bill.

I think, the Parallel is not unjust; and let your Tenderness for People in *Scotland*, whom without Offence to you, ye do not understand, be what it will — nay, and were their Designs less mischievous, or that Mischief less obvious — Yet if you will consider, that the Liberty of the Church of *Scotland*, and her general Security is interwoven with the Uniformity of Worship, and that all together is twisted to, and mingled with her Civil Rights in the Act



of Union; This, by all Manner of Reasoning, and by the Examples above said, ought to govern you in this Case, and you ought not to desire your united Friends in Scotland to un hinge their Constitution, to grant a Liberty, which when granted, the Seekers will not make use of, and which in granting, destroys the very essential and vital Principles of the Union; which Union, if once broke into by this Violence, can never again be restor'd,

As to the Danger of your own Liberty in England, tho' if it were in Danger, it would be a fatal Piece of Policy, and doing a terrible Evil that God might come, thus to secure it; yet I see no just Reason to fear any thing to the Toleration in England from this Matter, they have no Connection together, not the least Dependance one upon another, neither can there be any Argument drawn from the one to the other——If there be any Danger, 'tis, that if the Constitution of the Church of Scotland be overthrown, as by this Attempt it would—I do not see, how it could be possible for the Interest of the Dissenters to stand long——But of this I shall speak more particularly, as I go on.

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